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ABSTRACT

Prepared to assist teachers who are using the case in class discussion, this case study describes a suburban, college-preparatory high school located in the pseudonymously named "Northwood," a midwestern "rust belt" city characterized by rapidly shifting demographics and a growing commercial tax base. Although the city is now 25 percent black, another newer high school remains predominantly white. Over the past 15 years, Northwood High has shifted from 70 percent white to 70 percent black and other minorities. Although black students are economically similar to the Jewish families they have replaced, teachers found them culturally different and behaviorally challenging. Morale was at its worst when Principal Don Hawley arrived; a reformer at heart, he immediately initiated two new programs: a Positive Peer Influence (PPI) program that broadened students' role in improving discipline and a participatory decision-making program that gave teachers responsibility for policy. The Faculty Senate has proved a mixed blessing. Some teachers find it too formal or too disruptive; others appreciate having more say. Teachers are positive concerning the PPI and other human relations innovations and evince a caring attitude toward students. Teachers are divided about the disciplinary system: while most feel it works pretty well, a few feel that the teacher's position has been undermined by the school's student empowerment focus. Almost no teachers have voluntarily left during the past decade. An appendix provides descriptions of additional school characteristics. Case teaching notes are also appended. (MLH)

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NORTHWOOD HIGH SCHOOL: A GOOD PLACE TO WORK?

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EA 022 410

NORTHWOOD HIGH SCHOOL: A GOOD PLACE TO WORK?[1]

Approaching Northwood High School from the network of expressways that criss-cross the area, the school appears quite ordinary, like dozens of others in the suburbs. The front facade is standard 50's secondary school: Two stories, surrounded by a great deal of grass, with the usual newer wings built to accommodate the increased student population of the 1960's.

The school's organization is like many others, although the staffing and amenities are greater due to the growing commercial tax base that fuels Northwood's economy. In 1989, Northwood had approximately 1700 students, a principal, three full-time assistant principals, 116 teachers (8 of whom are special ed.), 7 counselors, 3 librarians, 8 psychologists and social workers, one full-time and 3 part-time staff whose job is to work in various student human relations programs. Department chairs are teachers, and receive one extra planning period to carry out their largely administrative functions.

Curriculum at Northwood is traditional college preparatory. As one teacher said "Every student who goes to this school thinks that they are going to college. It may be unrealistic, but they still think that." Within English, Science and Social Studies there are a few off-beat courses, such as "Science Fiction and Fantasy" and "Horticulture", and a variety of more standard electives such as "20th Century Novel". Business Education, in an effort to maintain enrollments in this largely college-prep environment, has introduced popular courses in law and in management. A recent curricular innovation is a school-within-a-school for at-risk students --approximately 15 percent of the 10th graders-- where affective education is emphasized. Curriculum at Northwood reflects teacher preferences. As the chair of an academic department said:

> The faculty controls curriculum decisions. For example, I looked over [an elective] and thought we ought to drop the course--the text was really boring, and it didn't seem as if we needed it. I was voted down decisively--the rest of the faculty wanted to keep the course and find a new book. [How much control do you have over that?] We'll try to coordinate with Lattimore [the other, newer high school in the city] but in all likelihood we'll get what <u>we</u> want.

In addition to a twenty-year tradition of teacher control over the curriculum, Northwood teachers benefit from a generous district staff development program, which permits them to attend virtually any meeting or workshop they choose--even if it is in another state. Many teachers take advantage of this program during any given year.

Two additional characteristics distinguish Northwood from other suburban schools. The first is that it is one of a small number of predominantly minority suburban schools in the midwest. Second, ten years before the current wave of recommendations for school-based management and teacher empowerment, Northwood initiated a participatory decision-making program that placed responsibility for policy in the hands of teachers, and increased the role of students in improving student discipline and human relations.

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[1] This case was prepared for class discussion by Karen Seashore Louis, Department of Educational Policy and Administration, University of Minnesota. All names are pseudonyms, and the case is not intended to illustrate good or bad management. Preparation was supported by the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Center for Effective Secondary Schools, which is funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement (Grant No. G-008690007). The case does not necessarily reflect the views of either of the supporting agencies.

The Demographic Shift

Northwood is a first ring suburb of a midwestern "rust belt" city. The big population growth was after WWII, when the first G.I.s moved out in search of inexpensive housing. Fifteen years ago, its population was predominantly white and largely middle and lower middle class. Most of the middle-class residents were Jewish--one long time teacher estimated that it was as high as 70%.

But Northwood was subjected to a rapid demographic shift over the intervening years, going from more than 70% white to 60% black and 10% "other minority" by 1989. White flight and black immigration are not declining; soon the school will serve almost exclusively a minority population. The shift has not had much impact on the socio-economic composition of the school. Approximately 15 to 20% of the students' families are either on some form of income support or marginally employed. Many of the remaining white students are from families that emigrated from the rural South to work in the auto industry, and current economic conditions don't permit them to move. Most of the incoming black families have "really sacrificed to get themselves and their kids out of the city". Although the city of Northwood is now 25% black, Lattimore, the newer high school, remains predominantly white.

Teachers say that although Black students are not economically dissimilar from the Jewish families they have replaced, they are very different culturally. In addition, there have been significant increases in the number of students who experience serious family stress, or who are chemically dependant. Also:

> ..Teachers complain about kids who move in from [the city]. They cause trouble and confrontations because they don't understand our norms. It takes them a while to adjust.

These social changes created morale problems among the experienced teachers, who found it necessary to adapt quickly to a different set of demands and behaviors. When the current principal, Don Hawley arrived, the school was in a turmoil:

> There were incidents with weapons and fighting that had the community up in arms. The kids were terrible to each other--I was shocked by how badly they treated each other...the parents were really on edge. There were a lot of for sale signs.

The board had promised the teachers that they would hire the best principal in the country to "take back the school". The teachers were hardly confident when Hawley arrived, straight from a Catholic school for girls. Nor did Hawley's first actions allay their concerns.

New Approaches to School Organization and Climate

Principal Don Hawley, now in his early 60's, is a very experienced educator. Although his position prior to taking the Northwood principalship was in the parochial system, his reputation in public education is solid. During his tenure at Northwood, he has turned down several job offers from other more prestigious suburbs, and he is an adjunct lecturer at Midwest University in their administrator training program.

Hawley's most obvious characteristic is his reformer's temperament. Like most committed reformers he has a strong philosophy, which has two separate credos:

> We live in a democratic society, but most schools are run like a dictatorship. You've got to give the teachers ownership so they

> aren't sitting around in the faculty room bitching about all the things you're not doing.
>
> If you have a positive school climate, you will have improved academics. The key is the Caring Quotient. If the caring quotient goes up, you will see achievement, maybe even I.Q. go up. Because our students care for each other, and for the teachers, they do things (academically) that they wouldn't otherwise do.

In addition to involving teachers and parents in revising the student handbook and code of conduct, and setting up a number of human relations training activities support programs for students, Hawley introduced several changes in the school's governance structure that he saw as called for by this philosophy.[2] The Faculty Senate was announced immediately after Hawley's arrival. Hawley says:

> This was very unique. Most principals are afraid to give away the power.

The Senate had--and still has-- responsibility for the development of all school policies, which are decided on by faculty vote. It is run by the faculty, who elect a President and a Secretary, as well as an executive committee. Hawley attends, but does not run the meetings nor control the agenda. He is able to put items on the agenda, but says "I've had three proposals voted down unanimously."

The Positive Peer Influence (PPI) program was used at Hawley's previous school, and transplanted to Northwood. PPI is a half-credit "course", facilitated by two teachers and populated by student leaders, which meets every day and tries to handle non-academic student problems in the school. The two sex-segregated sections are intended to reduce the need for adult disciplinary action:

> They look for suicides, fights, drug problems, other things. They can call kids out of class to talk to them. They get kids who need it into helping situations. All of the discussions in the PPI meetings are confidential, the kids never talk about what they've learned outside. The only exceptions are weapons and cases where someone's life may be in danger. We keep it sex segregated because we worry that some topics, like pregnancy and so on, would be hard to discuss in a mixed sex group (A PPI facilitator).

A characteristic of PPI that distinguishes it from more traditional student court or government activities (which also exist at Northwood) is its deliberate inclusion of "negative student leaders"--"druggies", "burnouts" and "rednecks" as well as popular athletes and valedictorians -- and its focus on prevention and intervention, not punishment.

Teachers' View of Their Work and Participatory Programs

Almost no teachers have voluntarily left Northwood during the past decade. Although a few are dissatisfied or burned out, most express deep affection for the school and its students. In addition, there is no evidence of racial tension, either between students or between teachers and students. The teachers, whatever their concerns and gripes are proud of the fact that they have held the school together, that academic standards are high, and that community, state and

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[2] This case is restricted to a description of programs that deal with changing teacher and student authority and influence in the school, and does not cover all the arrangements and activities at Northwood that Hawley initiated.

national recognition is accruing to a school that has made a rapid transition from predominantly white to predominantly minority. During this time, teachers have not only stayed but have remained engaged in most aspects of their work. As one teacher said:

> Very honestly, ten years ago when people were saying that a migration from the city was going to repopulate the community and Northwood would become a mostly black high school, my feeling was that I would leave. I just didn't see how it could happen without all kinds of fighting and tension. But, here I am. And, the kids in my classroom now, they are not any different that they were before. They're just the same and I like them just as much.

Teachers almost uniformly agree with one who stated that:

> [We have] administrator respect for the job that we're doing and they expect that you'll do a good job. They care enough to want you to do a good job, and that's important. At a lot of the schools that I've worked with [during a joint curriculum development program] the administration doesn't expect you to do a good job, and they don't care...I feel that I am appreciated and respected by the people whom I respect.[3]

Reactions to the Faculty Senate have been mixed since the beginning -- and remain so. Most teachers were not initially enthusiastic about this move. One, since appointed to a student support position, recalls:

> I was one of the people who thought this was a crazy idea. They hired Don Hawley to make the school work, and now he was turning around and telling us to do it.

Acceptance is still not complete. Hawley comments that:

> I still get people coming into my office to ask me to do something about this or that. I tell them to put it on the Senate's agenda.

Teachers also exhibit confusion about the policy process, particularly in their tendency to attribute significant policy actions to Don's influence. One stated that, in response to the fact that a three day suspension for fighting was not working "Don extended the suspension to ten days." This had, however, been done by the Senate.

Some of the teachers who had been at Northwood for ten or more years viewed the Senate as "a pain in the neck", and felt that it just provided an opportunity for colleagues to speak endlessly on topics of low interest and importance. Responses from two teachers reflect this view:

> The Senate is good in theory, but not in practice. What happens is that we discuss everything to death-- people go on and on, and who even cares about some of the topics....And then, not all decisions get made in the senate although they are supposed to be. We are having

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[3] All of the respect and support from the administration did not help teachers deal with another area of chronic complaint: "Parent relations are not very good. Parents don't support us." Lack of respect was not an issue, but lack of involvement was a concern for most.

> an Assembly on Friday (during what will be 5th period). Was any faculty member consulted on that? If they had been they would have said no: these kinds of interruptions are very disruptive to our classes.
>
> I'm not a very patient person. I don't like those meetings. I like them when there's a clear agenda, they ask for questions and then let me go...I like cluster meetings (with an administrator and all teachers who have a given prep period free) much better ... It's not a good place to raise serious questions. If I've got serious questions, I'll never raise them in that Senate.

Teachers offered suggestions for ways of revising the Senate -- all of which questioned it's basic structure. Several said that they wished the principal would run the meeting, since it was more difficult for a teacher-president to control other faculty's behavior. Another suggested that the Senate was not capable of handling the day-to-day issues that affect teachers the most.

Another concern was that the Senate was too public and formal: most teachers feel somewhat intimidated in Senate meetings, because of its potential for introducing friction, and also the possibility of "failing" in public:

> I wouldn't bring up something that bothered me at the Senate. It is difficult when you know that a topic is controversial and I just don't like to discuss it in that way.
>
> In the large meetings, a lot of times, you will do [say] something wrong and you'll get it with both shotgun barrels...

The teachers who have come to Northwood more recently tend to appreciate the school's distinctiveness, however. One said:

> Well, we have more of a vote; it's more democratic here. In the school [that I last taught in] the principal controlled everything...we had very little say in what was going on, and here we have quite a bit of say.

Even these teachers, however, did not see the Senate as making a major contribution to their satisfaction.

On the other hand, many teachers felt that they, as well as students, benefited from the PPI program and other human relations and support activities for students. As one said:

> Let's say that I am having class and one of my students is having serious problems. Not learning problems, something else, something that is really messing up their emotions or their behavior. I know that I can send this kid down to one of the [PPI] groups. And they will go, because it's students and they like the program. And I can feel that I both cared for the that kid and that I took care of my class by making sure that it didn't get derailed.

The work of the school involves many expanded roles for teachers, although they are largely of a single type, counseling and helping roles. Quite a few teachers have moved into such activities on a temporary or full-time basis. A very large proportion of teachers are involved episodically -- up to 25% in some capacity in most years.) All of this work takes teachers out of traditional classroom activities, and into other areas.

Not all teachers felt that these arrangements were flawless from a teacher's perspective:

> ...sometimes we feel that administrators don't think that class work is important. There are so many interruptions, and students get taken out for several weeks in the Support Groups. Teaching is no longer the most important thing -- not just to the administrators..we have to be everything to these students.

Teachers who were not active in support groups and human relations programs voiced concerns about the qualifications of their peers to deal with the complex social and psychological problems that students brought to school:

> I worry about teachers conducting those groups...I mean they're not really trained as professionals, and they're working with students who have serious problems. I think that they should have trained people to do that work.

> I could probably remove your appendix if I had to. I could, but I sure as hell don't want to...you would much rather have someone with a little more training do it. That's my feeling on the PPI and other counseling things.

Nevertheless, the skeptics exhibited the strong school philosophy and culture about "caring" for adolescents, but merely questioned the means. Teacher culture emphasized the differences between the world occupied by today's adolescents, and their own experiences twenty or thirty years ago as a justification for the need to change the role of the school. And Hawley expressed tolerance for those who disagreed or did not want to participate:

> The teachers who don't agree with me--well, a lot of them are still good teachers. They just think that they should come to school, teach well, and go home. Just because they don't buy into all of my ideas doesn't mean that they are not good teachers, that they don't care about learning.

Teachers' attitudes about the disciplinary system, underpinned by PPI, were divided. While most felt that it worked pretty well, a few indicated that they felt discipline to be either too lax or that it gave equal weight to teacher and student reports of an alleged disciplinary infraction. Thus, a few teachers felt that the teacher's position was undermined by the student empowerment focus of the school.

Appendix A
Other School Characteristics

Physical Plant: Teachers joke about the building's physical plant-- those in the main building refer to the new wings as "the burbs"--but the distinction is a real one that affects the nature of the teachers' routine. Department are, for the most part, segregated by house, with English in B, Social Studies and Special Ed. in A, and Math/Science, Foreign Languages and the at-risk program in the main building. Business, Industrial Arts and Physical Education are located in space between the different buildings. The building was initially designed for a house system, so science labs and other facilities are located in three areas. This means that some science teachers are separated from their peers.

Most of the bustle is in the main building, and throughout the day the atmosphere feels much quieter in newer wings. Because the distances are so great, most teachers in "the burbs" do not go into the main cafeteria during their lunch periods, and certainly not in their free periods. Instead they eat lunch or relax in the teachers' lounges that are located in each building. The teachers' rooms in A and B building are attractive, with upholstered chairs, tables, and coffee pots. In the English lounge there is a large bulletin board, with notices about inservice opportunities, and handwritten messages from hopeful substitutes, reminding teachers to "call me first". The one in A building seemed less personalized, and less well frequented. This may be, in part, because of the antagonism between smokers and non-smokers, since the lounges have been ruled as smoking areas. The sense of isolation engendered by the physical dispersion is overcome, to some extent, if teachers choose to have a served lunch in "The Cardinal Cafe", a popular and successful operation that is staffed by the special ed. department to prepare students for jobs in the food industry. The Cardinal is also the site of the after school "Over the Hump" party, which is hosted by the administration for faculty members in the middle of every month.

Faculty: Almost all of Northwood's faculty are veterans, with 15 or more years of experience in the school. Until recently Northwood had no Black teachers, despite the increasing minority population of the community. Black teachers, who had less seniority, were laid off during district-wide reductions-in-force during the mid-to-late 70's. However, five years ago a position opened up for the first minority teacher. Over the last few years a number of teachers retirements have opened up additional slots, most of which have been filled with minority teachers: There are now seven or eight among the teaching staff, several of whom have transferred into Northwood from a neighboring suburb which is also predominantly Black but less affluent.

For the most part, the veterans describe the faculty as close -- but perhaps not as close as in previous years.

> We've worked together so long that we are almost like a family. We don't need any formal means to share our work--we just know. Like we all know that _____ has the best approach to teaching Moby Dick. If we have a substitute or a new teacher, I'm able to pull together all the stuff to make it easier for them, because we all know who is doing what.
>
> Teachers here get along wonderfully. When we first came, we had tons of social things together...we all used to go to the games, but now we don't have time.

The Students: Student morale is high, students act cheerful and appear to have high self-esteem. They express a great deal of support for the programs and organization of the school that increases their influence. In addition to the responsibility that students have been given through PPI, they are also given considerable freedom. For example, there is an open campus during

lunch, there are multiple entrances to the building that are rarely monitored. This freedom does not appear to pose significant disciplinary problems.

Student academic performance at Northwood is quite high, and still improving. In the eleven years since Hawley has been principal, the post-secondary attendance rate has increased from 65 to 85%, and the drop out rate has decreased from 9% to 3%. Most of the students attend college in the state, the top performers go to the University of Midwest and Midwest State, and the less academically proficient head to a local Community College. The school was selected as an excellent school during the second year of the National Recognition Program. Hawley, in particular, viewed this event as a key piece of evidence that Northwood was not only a good school, but had improved its quality during the period of population changes. They are also one of 13 high schools that were recently awarded a presidential recognition for their drug-prevention programs, they placed first in statewide debate teams for two years in a row, they have had finalists in competitive forensics, and a multitude of additional honors.

Despite external honors, Northwood teachers and administrators complain that the community does not always give credit for their school's performance:

> People...think we're not as good as [the other high school in Northwood] because we're black...The City Council tries to pretend that nothing has happened--but the Superintendent says that we better show that we are excellent so that we can stop white flight.

There is a great deal of discussion of student's need for warmth, for affection, for stability, for a place to turn to relieve the stresses of adolescent life. It was striking that many of the people that we talked to spoke of the students as children. An additional concern for some teachers --largely confined to those who had been at the school for a long time --focused on students' motivation to learn. For example, a relatively new teacher, whose previous teaching experience was outside the area, was enthusiastic:

> They're more motivated, more open in class. They're a really good group of students.

Veterans of the school, were more guarded in their assessment:

> ...most of the students come to school with no breakfast, and then they conk out in 4th period before lunch...I don't know if their parents don't care, or what...What I've heard a lot of lately is 'C is okay', and when I ask if they want to do more work for a better grade, the answer is 'no.'

Other teachers mentioned that their own values conflicted with the values of students and their parents, whom they saw as:

> ...more materialistic, more concerned with clothes and cars. I don't know whether that's just our students or whether all students today are like that.

Most teachers agreed that the student subculture is more oriented to their peers than to academics. Students can be overhead talking in the halls about parties that they had been to the previous night, most of which involved drinking. Many of them also work. Thus, the focus on homework is relatively limited. Even conscientious students seem to do an hour or less of homework per night.

Teacher concerns about student stress and academic performance do not appear to be racially motivated. Students say that there are a few teachers in the school whom they believe to

be racist. However, they also claimed that this was a very limited problem, and in general they believed that relationships between teachers and students were "fair." The student subculture is notable for its lack of racial tension. However, there is increasing concern among the white students that they are becoming a minority that is so small that they will lose their "place" in the school. An administrator related the following story:

> A mother called me today and asked me to see her son -- one of our best kids -- on the football team, on honor roll, really popular with everyone. He came home yesterday and told his mother, 'Look I'm getting tired of being a minority.' That's sad for him and sad for the school.

Another teacher told us about a friend of hers:

> She lives in the Northwood district. She really likes this school and thinks it's a good school. But she's decided to send her daughter to a private school -- you know why? Because she feels that this is a time when kids ought to have a good time dating, have lots of boyfriends. And that may be kind of hard for a white student here in a couple of years...

Principal Leadership Style: If offices reflect leadership styles, then Hawley's would be a dead giveaway. It is a cheerful mess. A dead plant sits in one corner, with a few live ones in another. There are nick-knacks and mementos, including pictures, on most surfaces. One wall is covered with framed awards that the school has received; most surfaces are inches deep in piles of paper. Although there is a desk, it does not appear that it is used frequently: most of Hawley's work is with others, and then a round table and chairs are used. Coffee is always available for someone who pops in, and Don is as likely to hug the entrant as to shake their hand.

Hawley's leadership style is loose and easygoing. When people come to him for a solution, he feels that the appropriate response is to turn the problem back to them -- "What do you want to do?" His view is that the people who work for him are professionals -- they carry their own incentives and ideas with them --and his job is to arrange the school so that they can do their best work. For some, this attitude is annoying: they would like to see more decisive "action" from the front office. For others, it is a breath of life:

> When I first came here, I went up to Mr. Hawley the first day and asked him where I should sign in. He said "You don't have to sign in. You're a professional--I know that you'll do the job." You could have blown me over.

He is viewed as accessible by most of the teachers, who appreciate his support. One teacher joked, halfway seriously, that his supportive style was "too much":

> Sometimes you'll go to Don for a nickel's worth of advice, and get a dollar's, which will make your situation much worse!

Although Hawley is not bureaucratic, neither is he much given to wandering the halls, and "working by talking." Although he does walk around a few times a day, he reportedly visits classrooms relatively rarely (usually when he is on the teacher review cycle), and does not maintain a general schedule of visits. He rarely goes up to the second floor of the main building or to the "burbs". Nor does he intervene in many disciplinary issues short of suspendable offenses: these are handled by the security personnel, and by one of the A.P.s. He describes his days as flexible and relatively unstructured.

Hawley's manner is gentle, and he is rarely seen without a smile on his face, but he can also be tough. When it comes to his own core principles some people inside and outside the school perceive his commitment as inflexibility. When discussing threats to these affective education goals -- from whatever source -- he freely admits to being ready to oppose anything that will get in the way. A few teachers speak obliquely about there being some aspects of the school that cannot be changed. Still, most would agree with the individual who said:

> I never felt that I wasn't growing here -- everything I ever asked for, I got. It has been good working with such committed teachers and mentors.

NORTHWOOD HIGH SCHOOL: A GOOD PLACE TO WORK?

CASE TEACHING NOTES [1]

Introduction

These notes were prepared to assist instructors who are using the case in class discussion or inservice activities, and not necessarily for distribution to students. The case is intended to be useful both for teachers and administrators who have some responsibility for building level policy.

Instructors or group leaders may wish to select a list of questions to be discussed prior to or at the beginning of the class period where discussion time is limited, or to let them emerge more naturally during discussion. Groups may be assigned to look at a single issue and report back to the class, or the class may treat several issues as a whole. The case may be assigned by itself, or with Appendix A. At least an hour is suggested as a minimum time for discussion if both the case and appendix are used, and a broad range of questions is to be covered by the group as a whole.

An Overview of Key Issues in the Case

The main issue in the case is the use of "empowerment" as a "solution" to current educational problems. The case suggests that while changing the structure of authority in a school to include teachers and students has powerful beneficial effects, it does not constitute a panacea for all educational problems. Several other issues can be explored either separately or in combination:

(1) the principal: How would you describe the values of the principal toward teachers? How are they acted out? What are the limits as well as the possibilities of a leader who believes in empowerment?

(2) the students: How would you describe student engagement at Northwood? What actions does the school seem to take to get students to do their work? What obstacles are in the way?

(3) teachers' needs and student needs: The assumption at Northwood is that empowering students and caring for their needs will make a better setting for teachers' work. How does this happen? What are some of the difficulties in connecting teacher needs and student needs?

(4) structural changes: How valuable is the Senate as a structure for teacher engagement -- what are it's limits and possibilities? Discuss the PPI as a structure for the engagement of students -- what are its limits, possibilities and effects?

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Additional Issues and Questions

If the appendix is part of the assigned reading, some additional complexities might be brought out in discussion:

One characteristic of the school is the supportive leadership role played by the principal. He acts as if teachers are autonomous professionals who should be supported to carry out their work in the manner they see best. He does everything he can to get their staff needed resources when they are trying something new, indirectly and directly indicating that they should not worry about money, time, or the district. He has worked to develop the leadership potential of the staff, providing them with new kinds of training and opportunity. His door is open. His clearly articulated philosophy provides teachers with performance standards (excellence, caring) and environmental stability, reduces uncertainty, and brings positive values and recognition to teachers' work lives.

> To what degree are the successes of this school dependant on the principal? Are there any ways in which a successful reformer's leadership style may limit teacher empowerment? Is the absence of much instructional leadership on Hawley's part a weakness or an asset in relation to worklife quality? Might Hawley add further empowerment? How? What is his contribution to the creation of the school's culture and climate?

In most high schools, the nature of the students is treated as inflexible: In a low socio-economic population, you get low SES behavior, etc. Thus, teachers just have to manage what the community has dealt them, perhaps struggling slightly in their classrooms to mold values to conform more with their own. In Northwood, however, the student is seen as more malleable, more deeply affected by what the school can do. If students can be changed--made more able socially and psychologically to do the work, and made more engaged with the school--then they will work harder, thus improving the quality of teacher work life.

> How would you assess the school's underlying theory of student motivation? How reasonable are the assumptions in this school? In other schools? Can it be achieved in all schools, or is it necessary in all schools? What improvements and extensions might be made on Hawley's strategy for student involvement?

It is important to reflect on the combined meaning of the Senate and the PPI. At first glance, it may appear that there is an equal emphasis on teachers' and students' needs. Some critics of education argue that any attention directed to improvements that are not directly related to student growth and achievement are of little value.

> How much balance should be given to the needs of teachers and the needs of students? Do teacher empowerment and student empowerment ever conflict? To what degree does this case support or counter the view that all changes should focus more pointedly on student outcomes?

Formal participation, as in the Senate, was not totally effective as a vehicle for getting teachers to talk together or to exercise influence. Although all teachers at Northwood attended the bi-weekly meeting and therefore had the opportunity to directly influence school decisions and operations, they were less often enthusiastic about the quality of their participation and influence than teachers at other schools with fewer opportunities to affect decisions directly.

> Why did teachers express mild dissatisfaction? Does their dissatisfaction suggest any limitations to empowerment and participation as vehicles for school reform? Or, is this a case of "the more you give them, the more they want," or are there other, equally or more plausible interpretations? What other types of changes might increase teachers' sense of influence -- structural, political or cultural?

Northwood, despite its formal participatory structures, provided relatively few informal opportunities for teachers to work together on curriculum and instruction. Events that engaged a number of staff together focused on improving the student culture or, less often, improving instruction. Although departments were a source of identification for some teachers, the smoking issue, and the location of several departments in different buildings and on different floors undermined cohesiveness in several departments. The generous inservice programs largely involved teachers leaving the school by themselves, or with one or two colleagues and did not provide opportunities for collegial exchange. Several teachers indicated that they would welcome more opportunities for interaction. This raises the question of what it means to "treat teachers like professionals."

> What is the implicit model of professionalism at Northwood? Are there other models of professionalism that might be applied? What would they look like in practice?

Relatively speaking, the case indicates that this school is heaven for students. One cannot help but believe that this group of students --at least those that go on to college --can be the backbone of the growing Black middle class. The school has an unusual view of students, who are seen as simultaneously capable of considerable responsible and as non-adult and vulnerable.

> What does this view imply about how to organize and staff secondary schools? How well would it work in other community settings? What limits are there to the degree of responsibility that can be delegated to high school students? What about limits to the responsibility that the school should take on for meeting student's emotional and personal needs?

Northwood is affected by few mandates or constraints imposed from outside. It is located in a community in which there is a long tradition of permitting flexibility at the building level, and in a state whose constitution (and tradition) limit the number and specificity of regulations concerning testing, achievement standards, and curriculum.

> To what extent would a different set of district and/or state circumstances affect the degree to which Hawley could have introduced changes at Northwood? What current policy trends at the state and local level are likely to affect efforts to increase teacher quality of work life?

Appendix 16

END

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